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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, GUATEMALA — 320 DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON — October 13, 1953 DATE

REF :

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
OCT 14 1953

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SUBJECT: PLANS TO FOUND THE "PATRIOTIC FRONT," NEW GUATEMALAN ANTI-COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION.

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The independent El Imparcial of October 10, 1953, reported that Sr. José Gregorio DIAZ Loarca had issued a manifesto calling Guatemalans determined to save the country to meet in Guatemala City on October 11 to found a Frente Patriótica, an organization which would fight "for democracy, for constitutionality and for the defeat of extremism in Guatemala." It is, in short, to be a new anti-Communist organization.

Sr. DIAZ has for some time kept in the background of the anti-Communist movement and, on the record, appears to be a politically ambitious leader of the right wing. Born in 1897, he was a diplomat under the authoritarian regime of President Jorge Ubico, being Minister to Germany (1932-38), France (1938-41), Nicaragua (1941-43) and to Ecuador (1943-?). He was recorded during this period as being at first pro-Nazi, but during the war and afterwards there are indications that he deplored the extremes of Hitler's policies. He was known to be ambitious to rise in Guatemalan politics and is said to have been involved in plots to overthrow President Ubico. After the 1944 Revolution he was the presidential candidate of the Partido Acción Nacional, a small conservative party, and the following year was expelled to Costa Rica on charges of anti-government activities. He has since been active in embryonic anti-Communist plans against the Arévalo and Arbenz Administration, taking the line that "certain elements which would discredit the movement in the eyes of the people" should be kept in the background. He thus appears to represent the type of right-wing authoritarian-minded conservative which along with moderates and genuine democrats make up the Guatemalan anti-Communist movement.

Sr. Diaz's decision to form an anti-Communist organization openly represents a change in his tactics and it remains to be seen if it will be successful. As the Department is aware, the anti-Communist movement here has been divided and weakened by a proliferation of bickering anti-Communist parties and civic

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organizations and, at present, all of them are impoverished, timorous and largely inactive. Whether Sr. Diaz's organization will merely add another unit in this divided movement or will prove to be a force for the revitalization of the movement is the question.

Rudolf E. Schoenfeld